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Evaluation

Management response to the evaluation of the regional programme for Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States, 2006-2010*

Context, background and findings

1. The regional programme for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, 2006-2010, was approved by the UNDP Executive Board at its first regular session in 2006. It is an instrument for realizing the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). It acts as a bridge between the global and country programming conducted in the countries covered by the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (RBEC). It provides a framework for the provision of polic and knowledge-based advisory services to UNDP country offices, Governments and civil society organizations to achieve development results.

2. The evaluation report presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations resulting from the assessment of UNDP performance, achievements and results, and its strategic positioning in the region. The aim of the evaluation is to provide accountability for the achievement of results and resources used, identify successful approaches and challenges, and learn lessons from implementation in a regional setting. Most importantly, the evaluation is intended to feed directly into the development of the new RBEC regional programme to start in 2011. The evaluation was carried out between July and December 2009 and included a comprehensive desk review supplemented with five detailed country studies.

3. The evaluation concluded that the RBEC regional programme in general and the RBEC Bratislava Regional Centre in particular are extremely important for fulfilling the UNDP mission in the region. The evaluation team recognized that the Centre has a strong capacity and in-depth expertise in most UNDP priority areas and is a unique source of knowledge and advice for the country offices. It also noted that the programme is being implemented in a fast-changing region and in the complex environment of implementing the UNDP regionalization policy. In this respect, the evaluation will also contribute to the ongoing independent evaluation of regionalization in UNDP being conducted by the Evaluation Office.

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Annex. Key recommendations and management response

Evaluation recommendation 1. Develop and implement a more relevant approach to programming at the regional level that recognizes the uniqueness of regional programming within UNDP.				
Management response: Relevant and acceptable, response already initiated. Project design under the new regional programme 2011-2013 was tailored to country needs and preceded by extensive consultations with national and regional stakeholders. The new regional programme addresses the key issues raised in this evaluation.				
Key action(s)	**Time frame**	**Responsible unit(s)**	**Tracking***	
			Comments	**Status**
1.1 Reflect evaluation recommendations in the new regional programme for Europe and the CIS, 2011-2013	2011-2013	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
1.2 Initiate discussion on how the UNDP approach to regional programming guidelines and procedures can address the evaluation recommendation	December 2010	RBEC		
Evaluation recommendation 2. Focus on the development of "issue oriented" regional projects with an emphasis on the subregional level and ensure active participation of the respective country offices in the design of the intervention.				
Management response: Relevant and acceptable, response already initiated. The new regional programme document for 2011-2013 has been formulated in close consultation with country offices and other stakeholders and is enhancing subregional and area-based approach to respond to specific development needs and to coincide with the priorities of major partners in the Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.				
Key action(s)	**Time frame**	**Responsible unit(s)**	**Tracking**	
			Comments	**Status**
2.1 Reflect evaluation recommendations in the new regional programme for Europe and the CIS, 2011-2013 and subsequent programming	2011-2013	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
Evaluation recommendation 3. Keep knowledge products and knowledge management services as a top priority of the regional programme and ensure adequate investment in this area.				
Management response: Relevant and acceptable, response already initiated. The new regional programme for 2011-2013 will continue to focus on knowledge management, facilitating the demand-supply flow of knowledge across the region; supporting the ability of countries to share and access experience and expertise, promoting East-East cooperation, and cooperation with other regions, as needed. The existing tools enabling the exchange of knowledge will be improved and new ones created.				
Key action(s)	**Time frame**	**Responsible unit(s)**	**Tracking**	
			Comments	**Status**
3.1 Reflect evaluation recommendations in the new regional programme for Europe and the CIS, 2011-2013 and subsequent programming	2011-2013	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
3.2 Strengthen dedicated capacity for knowledge management in the Bratislava Regional Centre	2011-2013 (additional capacities on board by December 2010)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
3.3 Enhance supporting tools for knowledge management	2011-2013 (Enhancements introduced by December 2010)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre and BDP		

Evaluation recommendation 4. Reconsider the strategic position of the regional programme and its contribution to development results through high-quality development services to Governments and other UNDP partners in cooperation with the country offices, rather than as a "link" between the headquarters and country offices or an internal consulting unit focused primarily on supporting country offices and managing projects.				
Management response: Relevant and acceptable, response already initiated. The Regional Centre has been and will continue strengthening its capacity to provide high-level policy advice to Governments and other UNDP partners.				
Key action(s)	**Time frame**	**Responsible unit(s)**	**Tracking**	
			Comments	**Status**
4.1 Conduct policy-centred research, and based on that research provide high-level policy advice in poverty reduction	2011-2013	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
4.2 Monitor and assess the social impact of the financial crisis, and based on that research provide high-level and quality policy advice	2011-2013	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
4.3 Strengthen capacities in the area of climate change with special attention to the policy level (climate change negotiations)	2011-2013 (strengthened capacity secured by June 2010)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
4.4 Monitor programming pipeline in the region to ensure prompt and efficient response to the specific needs of the region and reflect its changing development context	2011-2013 (monitoring framework in place by December 2010)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
4.5. Strengthen key vehicles of communication on key issues of development in the region (such as the *Development and Transition Newsletter*)	2010-2011 (strengthened vehicles in place by December 2010)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
Evaluation recommendation 5. Strengthen investment in the professional development of staff, specifically in the skills related to consulting activities, and carefully plan staff workload.				
Management response: Relevant and acceptable, response already initiated. Talent management, succession planning and workload management will be strengthened and the annual Learning Plan designed to address the recommended skill building.				
Key action(s)	**Time frame**	**Responsible unit(s)**	**Tracking**	
			Comments	**Status**
5.1 Ensure a core of key advisory capacities for a minimum of 2-year forward-looking time periods	2010-2011 (already ongoing)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
5.2 Annual Learning Plan designed based on staff needs assessment	2010-2011 (already ongoing)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
5.3 Close monitoring of staff surveys and timely response	2010-2011 (already ongoing)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		
5.4. Develop Expert Exchange scheme to involve a wider pool of practitioners into advisory support	2010-2011 (already ongoing)	RBEC/Bratislava Regional Centre		

* Status of implementation is tracked electronically in the Evaluation Resource Centre database.